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ABSTRACT

This survey of 37 state special education administrators found that 78 percent have implemented emergency certification procedures designed to address critical staff shortages in special education. Over three-quarters of the states with emergency certification procedures issue such certificates for only 1 year, and renewal is contingent upon completion of appropriate coursework. In almost one-third of the states with emergency standards, individuals must already have a valid teaching certificate to obtain an emergency certificate in another area, while in an additional 21 percent of the states, the individuals must hold a valid teaching certificate and have completed coursework leading to the proper certificate. Only two states allow emergency certificates to be issued to persons who have not completed a bachelor's degree. Emergency standards tend to be applied uniformly across grade levels, handicapping conditions, and type of personnel. A table presents, by state, the major features of each state's emergency certification program and indicates the minimum qualifications or prerequisites for obtaining emergency certification. Solutions to the problem of personnel supply and demand in special education are noted. (JDD)

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INFORMATION BULLETIN #43

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STATE EMERGENCY CERTIFICATION PROVISIONS –

Results of a 1990 Survey

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National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education
Professions Information Center
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091
703/264-9474

- *Are States sacrificing the quality of teachers in an effort to combat the quantity issue of special education and related service personnel by utilizing emergency certification?*

- *How many states employ emergency certification standards?*

In an attempt to find the answers to these questions, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) conducted a survey. The NASDSE survey found that while standards for emergency certification vary across States, it becomes evident that these standards have been designed to strike a compromise between the two seemingly competing goals of quality and quantity.

The following is a summary of results compiled from NASDSE's survey, prepared by Fran O'Reilly, consultant to the National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education.

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STATE EMERGENCY CERTIFICATION PROVISIONS –

Results of a 1990 Survey

Difficulties in recruiting, training and retaining qualified special education and related services personnel have been well documented (see for example, Akin, 1988; NASDSE, 1990). In fact, shortages in personnel across all education areas has been an issue of increasing importance, due in part to an increase in the school age population, a trend projected to last well into the 90's (NCES, 1988). The American Association of State Colleges and Universities (1988) reports that 200,000 new teachers per year will be needed until the mid 1990's, a 100 percent increase over current levels. To combat widespread personnel shortages, States have revised their certification standards and procedures and have implemented a number of initiatives designed to attract individuals to the teaching force or to shorten the route from training to teaching.

A 1990 survey conducted by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) indicates that 78% of the 37 States responding to the survey have in place emergency certification procedures designed specifically to address critical staff shortages in special education. Half the States adopted such standards during the past decade, with 19% of the States reporting having implemented emergency certification procedures within the last two years.

While there may be some overlap, emergency certification should not be confused with alternative certification procedures which enable individuals with specific skills and qualifications to obtain certification through alternative and typically shorter means than traditional teacher training programs. Emergency certification is a short-term situation, as reflected in the transitory nature of the labels of the certificates States award using emergency procedures (e.g., provisional, temporary, conditional, or limited). In addition, the NASDSE survey found that over three-quarters of the States with emergency certification procedures (76%) issue such certificates for only one year.

The NASDSE survey found that the standards for emergency certification vary across States, but in some cases it is evident that these standards have been designed to strike a compromise between the two seemingly competing goals of quantity and quality. For example, in almost one-third (31%) of the States with emergency standards, individuals must already have a valid teaching certificate to obtain an emergency certificate in another area, while in an additional 21% of the States, the individuals must hold a valid teaching certificate *and* have completed coursework leading to the proper certificate in order to receive emergency certification. Only two States allow emergency certificates to be issued to persons who have not completed a bachelor's degree. Also, most States (76%) reported that while certificates are renewable, in most cases, renewal is contingent upon completion of appropriate coursework.

The survey conducted by NASDSE also found that across States, emergency standards tend to be applied uniformly across grade levels (e.g., elementary or secondary), handicapping conditions and type of personnel (e.g., teachers, administrators). However, there are often limitations on the applicability of the

procedures. For example, 24% of the States reported that emergency certificates are available only for teachers, while three States (10%) reported that the standards apply only to specific categories of staff.

For the 37 States responding to the NASDSE survey, the attached table summarizes the major features of their emergency certification programs, and indicates the minimum qualifications or prerequisites for obtaining emergency certification in each State. The table reveals many similarities across States in the features of their emergency certification programs. One feature common across the majority of States (76%) is that a request for an emergency certificate must be accompanied by documentation that a school district has attempted but is unable to hire an appropriately certified individual. Also, in many States the emergency certificate is valid only in the district for which it was requested.

As noted above, personnel shortages in special education are likely to continue rising throughout the coming decade. While the use of emergency certification procedures provides a stop-gap solution, States and school districts must be careful to ensure that such procedures do not sacrifice overall program quality and are encouraged to investigate alternative efforts to try and solve the dilemma presented by personnel shortages. A recent issue of NASDSE's Liaison Bulletin (May, 1990) devoted to the area of personnel supply and demand in special education offered several solutions for now and for the future. Some of these include:

- Increase the financial incentives to study and work in special education;
- Formalize teacher recruitment measures on a wide scale;
- Emphasize the role and responsibility of teacher trainers at institutions of higher education to be involved as part of the larger system for providing a free appropriate public education;
- Work towards reciprocity in licensing and certification across States; and
- Stimulate continuing education opportunities to keep special educators abreast of a changing field.

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MAJOR FEATURES OF 36 STATE EMERGENCY CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
ALABAMA	Provisional	Teachers only	One year; renewable with plan showing teacher is earning 6 semester hours or 9 quarter hours each year towards professional certification	-For person who has not completed a college degree in an approved program in teacher education. Requires minimum of 64 semester hours or 96 quarter hours of collegiate credits in accredited institution.
ALABAMA	Critical Need	Teachers only	One year, renewable	- Must document inability to employ a properly certificated teacher - Must include name of institution where teacher is enrolled in coursework leading to proper certification - For teachers who are already certified but are working out-of-field
ARIZONA	Emergency	N/A	One year, renewable with coursework	- Must verify emergency by school district superintendent - Requires bachelor's degree or teacher education program, including student teaching or two years of classroom teaching within grades K-12
ARKANSAS	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A

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STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
CALIFORNIA	Emergency	Applicable only for teachers of Learning handicapped, Severely handicapped and Physically handicapped	One year, renewable with coursework	-Requires valid CA teaching credential or posession of, or verification of eligibility for an out-of-state credential in special education AND at least one year of teaching experience within the past 10 years in area of specialization OR completion of at least six semester hours of college work appropriate to the credential in the area of specialization desired - Must include statement of need certifying inability to hire appropriate person
COLORADO	Temporary	N/A	Maximum of five years, not renewable	-Must attest that a Colorado endorsed special education teacher is not available -Person must hold a Colorado teaching or special services certificate in any area -Person must enroll in an approved university program in the appropriate area of special education, which will lead to endorsement in the area

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
DELAWARE	Limited	N/A	Three years, not renewable	-Person must have a B.A. and a Standard elementary or secondary teaching certificate and 6 semester hours of specialized preparation
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A
GEORGIA	Not available	Teachers only	One year, renewable if criteria met	-Bachelor's degree plus 10 hours -Some differences in requirements by handicapping condition
IDAHO	Letter of Authorization	N/A	One year, renewable	-Local school board must declare emergency -For teachers to serve in a position for which the teacher is not fully certified
INDIANA	Limited	Teachers only	One year, renewable with coursework	-Person must have any B.A. or B.S. -Must include certification in writing from the superintendent that no appropriate staff are available

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
IOWA	Conditional	N/A	Two years, not renewable	-Person must hold valid certificate and one or more endorsements but is seeking to obtain some other endorsement and has completed 1/2 the requirements or 12 hours towards the endorsement
KANSAS	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A
KENTUCKY	One year Certificate	Teachers only	One year, renewable with coursework	-Valid classroom certificate or Internship Statement of Eligibility and at least nine semester hours of credit from the special education component of the appropriate curriculum -Participation in two two-day workshops -Statement of superintendent that no qualified staff are available -Some differences by handicapping condition

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
MAINE	Conditional	Available only for teachers, school nurses, school guidance counselors, school psychologists, school psychological examiners, library-media specialists, and adult and community education directors.	One year, renewable for up to two additional one-year periods, with coursework.	-Evidence that no fully certified teacher available -Applicant must meet academic requirements for the requested endorsement -Applicant must have qualifying scores on teacher exam or pre-professional skills test -Applicant must work toward attainment of the appropriate professional education requirements
MASSACHUSETTS	Waiver Request	N/A	One year, renewable	-Person must enroll in a university/college program in area of certification waived. -District must certify that they could not secure a qualified person for the position
MICHIGAN	Temporary or Emergency	N/A	One year, renewable with coursework	-District must verify its efforts to hire qualified individuals -Requirements vary by position; for temporarily approved teachers, persons must have completed at a minimum, 1/2 of the course requirements for a major in a specific impairment area

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
MINNESOTA	Limited	N/A	One year, renewable with coursework	-Bachelor's degree and enrollment in an approved teacher education program and completion of 8 quarter hours of credit in methods of teaching provided the person has earned at least 8 quarter hours of college credit within the previous five years, or had one year of teaching experience. -District must certify inability to fill position with qualified teacher
MISSOURI	Temporary	Not available for administrators or for some related service providers	Two years, not renewable	-Within 12 hours of meeting permanent certification standards
NEVADA	Exceptions Clause	Teachers only	Five years, not renewable	-Person must hold an elementary or secondary license and within one year after beginning to teach, be enrolled in a program of preparation leading to licensing in the appropriate area

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
NEW JERSEY	Emergency	Available only for the field of educational services, teacher of the handicapped, teacher of the blind and teacher of the deaf	One year, renewable with coursework	-District must demonstrate that it has exhausted efforts to find appropriately certified personnel -Person must complete 6 credits per year toward the proper certificate
NEW MEXICO	Temporary	N/A	One year, renewable with coursework	-Employer initiated -Dependent upon documentation to support request
NEW YORK	Temporary	N/A	Up to four temporary licenses may be issued to one person	-Documentation that no certified teacher is available -Person must have minimum degree required in the certification area -Person must be enrolled in a college program leading toward certification by the beginning of the semester following initial employment
NORTH DAKOTA	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
NORTH CAROLINA	Provisional	N/A	One year, renewable up to 5 years based on coursework	-Based on need of employing school district -Requirements vary with each type of position, but essentially, person must hold a NC certificate and be assigned out-of-field. Individuals must work toward completion of provisional requirements at rate of 6 semester hours each year until full certification requirements are met
OHIO	Temporary	Teachers only	One year, renewable with coursework	-Person must have a valid standard teaching certificate and completed six semester hours in an approved program -Vacancy must be posted with the Ohio department of education for two weeks and no properly certificated and suitable candidate has been identified by the employing district.

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
OKLAHOMA	Emergency	N/A	One year, renewable with coursework	-Must be requested by a local school superintendent who must state intention of district to employ the individual -Person must hold a B.A., have completed 50 semester hours in General Education, 12 semester hours in Professional Education, and 18 hours in the area of specialization
RHODE ISLAND	Emergency	N/A	One year, renewable with coursework	-Minimum requirements include a bachelor's degree -Must provide evidence that no fully qualified candidates are available
SOUTH CAROLINA	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A
SOUTH DAKOTA	Temporary	Only for direct instructional personnel (e.g., teachers, speech therapists)	One year, can be extended with coursework	-Person must have a certificate but not be fully qualified for the assignment -Coursework must be specified in an application

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
TEXAS	Special Assignment or Emergency	Not available for administrators	One year, one renewal	-District must document conditions requiring special assignment permit and that a fully certified and qualified person cannot be secured. -Person must hold a B.A. or for permits authorized on a hardship basis, a minimum of 90 semester hours -Differs by condition but basically person must have a valid Texas teacher certificate or endorsement, and six semester hours directly related to the area requested
UTAH	Letter of Authorization	N/A	Time period specified in letter of authorization	-Person must hold a bachelor's degree and lack not more than nine quarter hours or six semester hours of credit in order to meet requirements for the initial certificate, or person can provide an acceptable recommendation from a training institution indicating the deficiency can be filled within one year.
VERMONT	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
VIRGINIA	Waiver	Teachers only	One year, renewable with coursework and plan for the attainment of endorsement requirements	-School division must make every reasonable effort to employ a qualified teacher endorsed in the appropriate area. -For teachers to serve in a position for which the teacher is not fully endorsed. -Each unendorsed teacher must have an identified resource person available for assistance. -Teachers must work at endorsement at rate of 6 credit hours per year.
WASHINGTON	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A
WEST VIRGINIA	Temporary	N/A	One year, renewable with coursework	-Superintendent must certify that county is unable to employ a professionally certified educator. -Bachelor's degree, recommendation of employing county superintendent, and recommendation of college official where individual will complete an approved program. -Person must also have six semester hours of credit applicable to the state approved content specialization program component for special education teachers

STATE	CERTIFICATE TITLE	RESTRICTIONS	TERMS OF CERTIFICATE	MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
WISCONSIN	Special or Emergency	Administators not issued emergency licenses	One year, renewable with coursework, if search again does not come up with a certified teacher	-Bachelor's degree -Evidence that no fully certified applicants were available -Special licenses are issued to licensed teachers who have not completed an approved program in the area to which they have been assigned. -Permits are issued to individuals who hold a bachelor's degree but have not completed an approved teacher education program
WYOMING	No Emergency Provisions	N/A	N/A	N/A